

Respond Safely to Emergency Releases

Chicago, IL | St. Louis, MO
(847) 463-7239
www.assuranceagency.com

Who Is Covered?

The Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER) standard, 29 CFR 1910.120, training requirements covers individuals who respond to emergencies. For example, first responders, hazardous materials technicians, hazardous materials specialists, fire department or law enforcement personnel are all individuals who may respond to emergency response situations. In addition, there may be employees at your facility who are responsible for responding to emergencies.

Recognizing a Hazardous Substance Release

Listed below are some examples of hazardous substance release situations which could occur at your facility:

- A hazardous substance release requires evacuation of employees in the area.
- The response comes from outside the immediate release area.
- The release poses, or has the potential to pose, conditions that are immediately dangerous to life and health.
- The release poses a serious threat of fire or explosion.
- The release requires immediate attention because of imminent danger.
- There is uncertainty that the personnel in the work area can handle the severity of the hazard with the personal protective equipment (PPE) provided.
- The situation is unclear, or data is lacking on important factors.

Emergency responders must be able to recognize a hazardous substance release. In addition, they should demonstrate a competency in:

- Analyzing an incident to determine the hazardous substances that may be present.
- Having hands-on experience with relevant sources of information that addresses hazardous substance releases.
- Developing procedures for implementing continuing response actions consistent with the local emergency response plan, the organization's standard operating procedures, and the Department of Transportation's Emergency Response guide.
- Understanding the potential hazards of a hazardous release site, including fires and explosions, confined space hazards, electrical hazards, powered equipment hazards, motor vehicle hazards, and walking/working surface hazards.

Hazards Involved

Emergency responders may encounter, and possibly be exposed to, several health and safety hazards including:

- Chemical exposure.
- Fire and explosion.
- Oxygen deficient atmospheres.
- Ionizing radiation.
- Biological hazards.
- Safety hazards.
- Electrical hazards.
- Heat stress.
- Cold exposure.

This document provides general information about a safety and health topic and is only intended for use in facilitating discussions with employees in safety meetings. It does not address all hazards, OSHA or local requirements related to the topic or accompanying photograph. This document cannot be relied on to determine whether a site specific situation meets all safety and health requirements. Assurance Safety Consulting is not responsible for any health and safety violation or injury at a job site.